

SOUTH MOLTON
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND THE

Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE

Year Ending December 31st, 1940

W. CRADDON MORTIMER,

Medical Officer of Health.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE
SOUTH MOLTON RURAL DISTRICT.

Population of the Rural Area 9133

Birth Rate—

Total—49 males; 61 Females; Total Births—110.

Legitimate—48 males; 60 Females.

Illegitimate—1 Male; 1 Female.

Still Births—3 Males; 3 Females. Legitimate.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age—Total: 1 Male;
3 Females. Legitimate.

*Death Rate, all causes—*73 Males; 62 Females; Total Deaths, 135.

Death Rate per 1,000—14.9.

Birth Rate per 1,000—12.0.

Birth Rate England and Wales per 1,000 Civilian Population
=14.6.

Death Rate England and Wales per 1,000 Civilian Population
=14.3.

Deaths from Measles (all ages), nil. Whooping Cough, nil.
Diarrhoea, under 2 years, nil.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	0
Non-Respiratory	1	1
Influenza	3	1
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	2	0
Cancer of Breasts	0	1
Cancer of all other sites	4	8
Cerebral Haemorrhage	6	4
Heart Disease	17	27
Other Diseases of Circulation	2	0
Bronchitis	8	4
Pneumonia	5	5
Other Respiratory Diseases	2	1
Ulcer of Stomach	2	0
Nephritis	2	2
Other Maternal Causes	0	1
Congenital Malformations (Birth injuries, Infant Disease)	1	2
Suicide	2	1
Road Traffic	1	0
All other Causes	9	4
	73	62

Chief cause of death is Heart Disease, 44 deaths out of 135 deaths. Cancer 15 deaths—a welcome decrease.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS.

Disease	Total Cases Notified under years											
	Under 1 Year	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20	35	45	65 and over
Smallpox												
Scarlet Fever			1			1	7					
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)												
Diphtheria												
Erysipelas												1
Puerperal Fever												
Puerperal Pyrexia												
Pneumonia						1					1	1
Cerebro Spinal Fever								1				

REMOVAL TO ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

One Isolation Hospital, in Tiverton. There are 35 beds available for Tiverton and District, including South Molton and District.

Two cases of Scarlet Fever were removed to Tiverton Isolation Hospital—both were evacuees—and they could have been isolated in their billets—but it did not appear reasonable that the foster parents should have to take the extra work and restrictions for nursing these infectious cases.

A third case would have gone to Hospital but there was no room—also an evacuee.

Apart from questions such as this, I am becoming more and more convinced that Isolation of Scarlet Fever in Hospitals does nothing to prevent the spread of the disease.

The incidence of notifiable infectious disease other than Tubercle and Measles is remarkably good. All the more so considering a considerable influx of evacuated children and adults.

Five of the Scarlet Fever cases were evacuated children.

For two years no cases notified of Diphtheria—1939, 1940.

We shall look for a continuation of this freedom from Diphtheria. A very large proportion of schoolchildren and many pre-school age have been immunized—and there is no reason why Diphtheria should not altogether disappear if this is continued. The weak spot is the consent of the Parents has to be obtained, and I consider the Minister should have had the pluck to make it compulsory—more especially as the Schools and Homes of the countryside are well filled with children. Immunization is the injection of a small quantity of Alum Precipitated Toxin in two doses—this means two small pricks at an interval of one month.

Unfortunately there is no immunizing agent against every child's disease. I am sometimes asked to immunize children against Whooping Cough, a distressing child's disease. A great deal of success is claimed by giving inoculation of Whooping Cough Vaccine during non-epidemic periods, and the immunization lasts a life time. Four does have to be given. I believe no Council up to date supplies this.

MEASLES.

74 cases have been notified of ordinary Measles. German Measles or Rubella are not notified. I don't know what object is gained by notification. It certainly does nothing to prevent the spread—it seems an expense and trouble without any benefit.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Number of cases still on the Register in our area:—

Jan. 1st, 1940—10 Males (9 Pulmonary, 1 Non-Pulmonary);
16 Females (13 Pulmonary, 3 Non-Pulmonary).

Dec. 31st, 1940—20 Males (17 Pulmonary, 3 Non-Pulmonary);
12 Females (10 Pulmonary, 2 Non-Pulmonary).

Increase of 10 Males. Decrease of 4 Females.

Nine New Cases during the year, all Males (7 Pulmonary,
2 Non-Pulmonary).

Of the nine new cases 7 were evacuees and 2 were residents.

Ages:—

2 years	Non-Pulmonary	Male	Evacuee
10 years	Non-Pulmonary	Male	Evacuee
23 years	Pulmonary	Male	Evacuee
30 years	Pulmonary	Male	Resident
35 years (2 cases)	Pulmonary	Males	Evacuees
39 years	Pulmonary	Male	Evacuee
42 years	Pulmonary	Male	Evacuee
45 years	Pulmonary	Male	Resident

There were 3 deaths from Tuberculosis in 1940—1 Pulmonary,
2 Non-Pulmonary.

EVACUATION.

We are getting to know something about Evacuation and Billeting, and I disagree entirely with the Minister of Health when he stated he hoped this would become an annual event.

There are other and graver problems that would have to be considered in this connection.

Billeting children accompanied by their parents has not proved a success—speaking from some experience. I do not consider it to be a desirable proceeding to place women with their children into private houses. They should be accommodated in separate houses. Unaccompanied children is a very different problem—and the children settle down and are happy. Discord arises in many cases when their mothers arrive—as they have been encouraged by the Government.

A great number of the children have improved in health.

We have been greatly surprised at the large number of children suffering from enuresis, and I certainly think welfare nurses should pay far more attention to this in the evacuated areas.

Contagious skin diseases were fairly prevalent, and lice. The latter has in our district largely disappeared—but Scabies still remains.

The work of our Department has largely increased and shows no sign of abatement, and I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Willey and the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Orland, for their help at all time.

W. G. MORTIMER.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR FOR THE SOUTH MOLTON RURAL AREA, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1940.

WATER.

A temporary augmentation scheme has been introduced at Witheridge pending the installation of the new permanent scheme proposed. Although this will not solve all the difficulties being experienced it will prove of great help in alleviating the shortage which has hitherto been an annual experience.

The Bishopsnympton water treatment scheme is to be proceeded with.

No further water supply developments have been made. Particulars of work done in connection with water supplies during the year are:—

No. of Inspections carried out in connection with private supplies	51
No. of Samples taken from existing supplies	13
No. of water supplies to existing houses improved	10
No. of Supplies taken into existing houses from Public Mains	5
No. of Visits to and Inspections of Public Water Supplies	248

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No sewerage works have been carried out during the year. Particulars of drainage works carried out are as follows:—

No. of New Drains laid to existing houses	13
No. of extensions to drains	23
No. of Drains cleared	6

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

No. of New Closets constructed	21
No. of Earth Closets and Privies converted to Water Closets	3
No. of New Closet Pans fixed	24
No. of New Flushing Cisterns provided	20

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

No new development has taken place during the year, and the position remains the same as reported on last year. 22 inspections have been made in connection with refuse disposal.

NUISANCES.

10 complaints relating to nuisances were received during the year, and were dealt with as follows:—

Abatement obtained in 9 cases as the result of informal action, and in one case as the result of statutory action.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No premises were found to be infested with bed bugs and it is unlikely that any such premises exist in this area.

SCHOOLS.

There are 29 Schools in the area and many buildings such as Village Halls, etc., have been brought into use as Schools owing to movements of the population. These are not always suitable for the purpose and much effort has been expended in obtaining necessary improvements in sanitary conditions.

DISINFECTION.

Nine premises were disinfected as the result of the occurrence of notifiable infectious disease.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.—72 samples of milk were submitted for examination for cleanliness during the year, out of which seven arrived too late to be examined, and 58 reached the required standard. All these samples were taken at the farms at the time of production. The percentage of passes is 89.23, as compared with last year's percentage of 85.81, and that of the year before of 79.26.

108 inspections of cowsheds have been made, and improvements to these are constantly being effected.

Slaughterhouses and Meat.—No slaughterhouses in the district are now in use. As the result of inspection of meat in shops, three lots of meat were condemned, and one inspection of an emergency slaughter was made.

Bakehouses.—There are 12 bakehouses in the district, which have been kept in a sanitary condition, and there has been no complaint concerning them.

HOUSING.

The Chulmleigh re-housing scheme consisting of 20 houses for the re-housing of persons displaced from Clearance Areas has been completed and 8 houses at Rose Ash provided for re-housing and general purposes have also been completed.

The houses and buildings in Anstey's Court Clearance Area, Witheridge, have been demolished, owing to their dangerous condition.

Owing to movements in the population, condemned houses at Chulmleigh have been taken over by the Council and have been let to evacuee families. Previously empty houses elsewhere have been taken over for the same purpose.

151 houses have been repaired as the result of informal and statutory action.

A. G. OXLAND, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

